

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development

Housing, Environment and Economic Development Committee: 4 August 2010

Subject: Housing Inspection Improvement Plan

1. Purpose

- 1.1** This report advises Members that the Scottish Housing Regulator has approved West Dunbartonshire Council's Housing Inspection Improvement Plan which was submitted in response to the Regulator's Re-Inspection Report published on 8 April 2010. This report also asks members to agree the reporting and monitoring arrangements to progress the Housing Inspection Improvement Plan.

2. Background

- 2.1** The Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) carried out an inspection of the Council's housing management services during November/December 2009. Following the inspection, the Regulator published its Re-Inspection report in April 2010. The Committee will recall from the meeting of 5 May 2010 that the Regulator awarded the Council a 'C' grade for its housing management service. This is a positive outcome and reflects the tremendous efforts that have been made by staff at all levels within the organisation and the support given by tenants and elected members.
- 2.2** For any 'C' graded service, the SHR requires that an Improvement Plan is agreed and implemented. The Council prepared a Housing Inspection Improvement Plan which outlined steps to address the following seven key recommendations made within the Re-Inspection Report

Continue to develop its performance management framework
Prioritise its tenant participation and improve communication with tenants
Further improve its complaints processes
Implement its new allocations policy as planned
Continue to improve its management of suspensions and by passing
Improve its communications on anti social behaviour cases
Continue to work to reduce rent lost through rent arrears and empty houses

In addition, the HIIP also addressed a further 38 areas for improvement outlined within the [West Dunbartonshire Re-Inspection Report](#).

3. Main Issues

3.1 The Housing Inspection Improvement Plan was submitted to the Scottish Housing Regulator on 29 May 2010, following approval by the following:-

- Housing Performance Improvement Board - 19 May 2010
- Member/Officer Working Group - 20 May 2010
- Council - 28 May 2010

3.2 The Scottish Housing Regulator advised us in writing on 10 June 2010 of their satisfaction with the Housing Inspection Improvement Plan and approved the Plan signalling the conclusion of their Re-Inspection. There is an additional requirement that we submit a progress update to the Scottish Housing Regulator by June 2012. This update should include relevant evidence.

3.3 The Housing Inspection Improvement Plan outlines the management and monitoring arrangements to ensure the objectives of the Plan are met. These are:-

- Housing Performance Improvement Board - monthly progress reports
- Member Officer Working Group - quarterly progress reports
- Housing, Environment and Economic Development Committee - six monthly progress reports
- Tenant Participation Liaison Group - six monthly progress reports
- Scottish Housing Regulator - six monthly progress reports

In addition, progress reports on a six monthly basis will be made available on the Council's website.

4. People Implications

4.1 There are no implications.

5. Financial Implications

5.1 There are no financial issues relating to this report.

6. Risk Analysis

6.1 Failure to implement the Housing Inspection Improvement Plan in response to the Regulator's report would attract an adverse reaction and may have wider consequences for the Council in the context of Best Value.

7. Equalities Impact

7.1 No significant issues were identified in a screening for potential equality impact of this report.

8. Conclusions and Recommendations

- 8.1** The Housing Inspection Improvement Plan has been approved by the Scottish Housing Regulator. This signals the conclusion of the Scottish Housing Regulator Re-Inspection of our housing management service. It is the culmination of a significant level of review and development work which has been carried out over the past eighteen months across all aspects of the Housing Service strengthening performance of the service in key areas and establishing good foundations for further improvement both operationally and strategically. This has resulted in the improved grading assessment by the Scottish Housing Regulator and the implementation of the Housing Inspection Improvement Plan will form a springboard for the next phase of improvement to the Housing Service as part of the Council's agenda for continuous improvement.
- 8.2** The Housing Inspection Improvement Plan has been developed in consultation with staff, elected members and tenant representatives.
- 8.3** It is recommended that the Committee:
- i) note and acknowledge the Housing Inspection Improvement Plan has been approved by the Scottish Housing Regulator;
 - ii) agree the monitoring arrangements for progressing the Housing Inspection Improvement outlined in Section 3.3; and
 - iii) note the requirement to submit an update on the progress in taking the Housing Inspection Improvement Plan forward to the Scottish Housing Regulator in June 2012.

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Date: 5 July 2010

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Appendices: 1. HIIP Approval Letter, SHR 10 June 2010
2. West Dunbartonshire Housing Inspection Improvement Plan

Background Papers: West Dunbartonshire Re-Inspection Report, SHR 4/10

Wards Affected: All